



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello, fellow FISH members!

We were delighted to receive messages of pleasure from those who had seen the John Clarke documentary on the big screen. We must continue to preserve our larrikin sense of humour; it is an easy and pleasurable means of propping up sanity in these extraordinarily unstable times.

It is interesting to see how a surname can become a definition of behaviour in a dictionary. If you want to pre-empt our next film (*Quisling*), please feel free to research.

Best wishes from us,

Roz Garwen



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ACE INTERNET SERVICES HIGHLAND CREATIVE

FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS INC

10.00 am Sunday 15th March 2026

8.15 pm Tuesday 17th March 2026

Quisling: The Final Days
[Norway 2024]

DIRECTOR: Erik Poppe

RUNNING TIME: 146 minutes

RATING: M (mature)

Synopsis:

A haunting historical drama that explores a dark lesser-known chapter of World War II. This psychological excavation of Vidkun Quisling, reveals a man who believed - to the bitter end- that he had acted for the good of his nation.

Review: Anastassia Gerkas

Quisling: The Final Days is a masterfully crafted historical drama that dares to explore a dark and lesser-known chapter of World War II. Directed with striking restraint and visual elegance, the film paints a chilling, introspective portrait of Vidkun Quisling, the infamous Norwegian politician whose name has become synonymous with 'traitor.' But rather than simply condemning him, the film digs deeper, offering a psychological excavation of a man who believed — to the bitter end — that he had acted for the good of his nation.

Set in the immediate aftermath of the war, the narrative is inspired by the diaries of Pastor Peder Olsen, who was appointed to Quisling as his spiritual advisor. The film lends itself to a character study rather than a courtroom drama, with many of the most potent scenes taking place in the conversations between the two men. This structure allows the audience to confront Quisling's ideology firsthand — his justifications, delusions, and unwavering belief that he was Norway's saviour, not its betrayer.

The film excels in presenting moral ambiguity. Quisling is played with eerie conviction by Gard B. Eidsvold. He exudes an unsettling calm, articulating his decisions with intellectual precision and emotional detachment. It's a performance that almost lulls the viewer into understanding, if not sympathizing with, his rationale. In Quisling's mind, his collaboration with the Nazis was a strategic decision to preserve Norway and limit bloodshed. And for a time, the film lets us sit with that possibility.

But the genius of *Quisling: The Final Days* lies in how it slowly peels back the illusion. As evidence of atrocities committed under his regime surfaces — including a harrowing scene at a mass grave and a heart-breaking first person

account of the atrocities committed at Auschwitz — the viewer is confronted with the stark reality of what his appeasement truly meant. Even then, Quisling's moral blinders remain fixed. His refusal to acknowledge the consequences of his actions is what finally breaks the spell the film so carefully constructs.

By the time the execution is carried out, Quisling still proclaims his innocence — and yet the audience no longer doubts his guilt. And yet, there lingers an unsettling question: how easily are we swayed by conviction, by rationalization, by charisma? *Quisling: The Final Days* doesn't offer easy answers, but it leaves viewers with a powerful sense of introspection. The final, unspoken question resonates long after the credits roll: under the right circumstances, what might any of us justify?

This film is an essential watch for enthusiasts of historical cinema and psychological drama. *Quisling: The Final Days* is not just a film about a traitor; it's a profound meditation on belief, guilt, and the dangerous clarity of self-righteousness.

Source: www.whattheshow.com.au ~ Anastassia Gerakas 6/7/2025 Edited extracts. Accessed 14/1/26.

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COMING UP:

April	<i>EL47</i> [Spain]	Sunday 19 th & Tuesday 21 st
May	<i>The Third Man</i> [UK]	Sunday 17 th & Tuesday 19 th
June	<i>The Teacher who Promised the Sea</i> [Spain] By popular request	Sunday 21 st & Tuesday 23 rd

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Some thoughts on: But Also John Clarke

Like many of us, I had seen this documentary on television previously, but my pleasure and delight in it was only enhanced by seeing it on the big screen. It was like meeting John Clarke all over again. He'd stepped out of the room after the deadpan satirical interviews – but look, here he is again, so familiar, so funny, so inviting of us all to share the joke with him.

I can do no better in this review than to quote a number of the people who spoke so lovingly of him. His daughter Lorin first of all, simply speaking of “my dad”, the man with a camera, and in that simple phrase, such a wealth of love and admiration and grief. I can't remember the names of all the interviewees, but they included Sam Neill, Jana Wendt and Shaun Micallef. And variously, they said:

- Fred Dagg was bigger than the Beatles in New Zealand.
- When he skewered a subject, they often didn't know they were dead until the next day.
- The eyes could change everything...there was either tremendous mischief, anarchy or complete derangement.
- People felt as if they knew him personally. There was such a sense of connection as if we were there with him.
- He worked on having a wink for the audience. He always had a twinkle in his eye – even on radio! How did he do that?!
- His immense kindness. His support of younger comedians, and particularly of women.
- His deadpan political interviews with Bryan Dawe were a completely new form of comedy. Clarke made no attempt to be his character; he'd simply be introduced by Dawe as Dolly Parton or the Dalai Lama or a particular politician with only the lightest assumption of a mask. And he was always peeking out of the side of the mask....
- These political interviews went to air without any vetting by the broadcaster. Tucked away in the news department, the entertainment overlords couldn't get their hands on them.
- When the ABC executives were worried that the series *The Games* wasn't funny and would be a flop, Clarke insisted that the audience would get it. He recalls a tradie telling him that he and his mates loved the show and that it was a secret between the people who made it and the people who watched.

I'm aware I'm commenting on the main character in the doco, rather than the film itself. But it's made with such love by his daughter with such a lovely mix of old family footage, graphics and archival material that it seems a tribute to her and her skill to say, I loved him too. And your doco nailed it!

Trish Topp

Many thanks to our guest reviewer Trish Topp and very best wishes, to our Reviewer in Chief, Ross Armfield, who is unwell. Ed.